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## NICOLE EARLE TAKES SEAT AS CHAIR OF THE MARYLAND RACING COMMISSION

Jun 10, 2026 | Latest News, Racing



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Last week, Governor Wes Moore announced that he has promoted sitting Maryland Racing Commissioner Nicole Earle to Chair the regulatory body effective today, June 10. She is the first African American woman to be appointed to the role.

The Maryland Racing Commission is the entity within the Maryland Department of Labor that regulates Standardbred racing, Thoroughbred racing, and pari-mutuel wagering in Maryland. It enforces rules for fair play and protects the labor force that delivers the economic impact of Standardbred and Thoroughbred racing to the Maryland state economy. Commissioners serve four-year terms without compensation. Chairs serve one-year terms.

Earle is a prominent leader in the Baltimore City community of Park Heights, which surrounds the Thoroughbred race track at Pimlico. She served as a Commercial Community Development Lender for Fulton Bank as well as the Development Manager for the Housing Authority of Baltimore City, where she managed complex projects like the \$400 million Uplands mixed-income development.

She is currently the President and CEO of Dominion Real Estate and of the non-profit **Dominion Community Development Corporation**. She has over two decades of experience in the real estate industry and has financed and managed over \$1 billion in real estate projects focusing on economic growth, affordable housing, and community revitalization. She holds a master's degree in Management and Public Policy, with a concentration in Financial Management and Economic Development, from Carnegie Mellon University.

"I am thrilled to welcome Ms. Earle as our new chairperson," said Maryland Racing Commission Executive Director Chris Merz. "Her impressive background in large-scale project analysis and strategy will be a vital asset to this leadership role. I look forward to working closely alongside her as we honor Maryland's rich racing heritage while building a modern and sustainable future for the sport."

Labor Secretary Portia Wu said that "Ms. Earle's extensive expertise in development finance and community investment makes her uniquely suited for this role. She brings a vital perspective that ensures Maryland

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racing remains an economic engine that uplifts local communities and that we uphold the integrity of this Maryland tradition.”

State law protects the integrity of the Maryland racing sector by requiring that a majority of the nine-member commission have no financial stake in racing. Moreover, state law forbids any member of the Maryland Racing Commission from holding any “official relation to a licensee or hold any stocks, bonds, or other financial interest in a licensee.” [Maryland Code, Business Regulation § 11-202\(c\)](#).

The outgoing MRC Chair George Mahoney, the founder of the construction firm [Monumental Paving & Extracting Company](#), which company counts municipalities and utility companies among its clients, will continue to serve as a Commission member.

Maryland Racing Commission meetings are open to the public. Visit <https://labor.maryland.gov/racing/meetings.shtml> to stream live meeting and to read the minutes of previous meetings.

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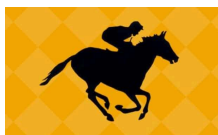
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